

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
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R 141213Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
TO SECSTATE WASHFC 8338
INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINR, IR
SUBJ: SHAH SPEAKS OUT AGAINST DISSIDENTS- AND MENTIONS U.S.

1. SHAH GAVE 90 MINUTE INTERVIEW TO IRANIAN MEMBERS OF LOCAL MEDIA ON MAY 13 IN WHICH HE CHARACTERIZED RIOTERS AS "INDIVIDUALS WANTING TO CONVERT IRAN INTO "IRANISTAN", ADDING THAT "WE WILL NOT PERMIT IRAN TO BE DIVIDED INTO ZONES OF INFLUENCE AS PLOTTED BY FOREIGN POWERS EARLY THIS CENTURY. IRAN IS INDIVISIBLE". CONTINUING HIS "FOREIGN DEVILS" THEME, THE SHAH SAID, "IF YOU REVIEW THE PAGES OF HISTORY YOU WILL CLEARLY SEE THAT NATIONAL EVENTS HAVE REPEATED THEMSELVES. IN 1907 IRAN WAS DIVIDED BETWEEN RUSSIA AND BRITAIN. IN 1945 THE FOREIGN MATTERS OF BRITAIN AND AMERICA (IN FARSI TEXT, "BEVIN AND WELLES") PROPOSED TO SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTER MOLOTOV THAT IRAN BE DIVIDED INTO THE REPUBLICS OF AZERBAIJAN, KURDESTAN AND KHUZESTAN-- LET ALONE THE EVENTS OF 1919 WHEN THE COUNTRY WAS WHOLLY DELIVERED TO THE BRITISH."

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2. IN A RELATED ANSWER, SHAH TERMED THOSE WHO WANT A RETURN TO THE CONSTITUTION AS "THE SAME GENTLEMEN WHO RAISED GLASSES OF WINE IN A TOAST TO PISHEVARI (A MOSCOW BASED SEPARATIST) MORE THAN THIRTY YEARS AGO. THESE PEOPLE ARE POLITICALLY BANKRUPT CASES WHOSE ONLY HOPE IS THE DISMEMBERMENT OF IRAN IN THE 1907 STYLE. WHENEVER THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT BECAME WEAK, THE QUESTION OF IRAN'S

PARTITION CAME TO THE FORE. THEIR ONLY HOPE IS FOR IRAN TO BE PARTITIONED INTO TWO LARGE STATES. THEY RECKON THEY CAN PERHAPS STAY IN POWER IN THE SOUTH AFTER AN AGREEMENT WITH THE TUDEH (OUTLAWED COMMUNIST PARTY OF IRAN). BUT THERE ARE NO TRIBES IN THE SOUTH ANYMORE." (FYI: THIS LAST COULD BE VEILED WARNING ALSO TO FOREIGN MEDDLERS, SUCH AS NEW AFGHAN REGIME AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH BALUCHIS.) SPECIFICALLY REFERRING TO MAY 11 DEMONSTRATION AT TEHRAN BAZAAR (REPORTED SEPTTEL) THE SHAH SAID, " SOME PEOPLE EVEN WAVED FLAGS WITH SPECIAL EMBLEMS. WELL, THEIR INTENTIONS COULD NOT HAVE BEEN STATED MORE CLEARLY," AN OBVIOUS REFERENCE TO THE HAMMER AND SICKLE BANNERS CARRIED BY SOME DEMONSTRATORS.

3. IN A MORE DEFENSIVE VEIN, THE SHAH SAID THAT THERE WERE OF COURSE SOME GENUINE CASES OF DISCONTENT CAUSED BY FAULTY DECISIONS BY GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS. BUT THESE PROBLEMS WERE KNOWN, WERE BEING TACKLED AND THERE WAS NO REASON THEREFORE FOR THOSE WHO WERE DISCONTENT TO DESTROY THEIR OWN NATION IN REVENGE. THE SHAH ADDED THAT THE RECENT STATEMENT PLEDGING TOUGH MEASURES AGAINST RIOTERS (TEHRAN 4526) IN NO WAY INDICATED A DECISION TO SLOW DOWN OR HALT THE POLITICAL LIBERALIZATION PROGRAM.

4. IN RESPONSE TO ONE OF THE FEW FOREIGN POLICY QUESTIONS, THE SHAH EXPRESSED HOPE THAT PARTITION OF PAKISTAN "DOES LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NOT OCCUR BECAUSE IT WILL DRASTICALLY CHANGE THE GEOPOLITICAL SITUATION IN THE REGION. SUCH DEVELOPMENTS ON IRAN'S EASTERN BORDERS HAVE DEMONSTRATED ONCE AGAIN THE NECESSITY FOR IRAN TO REINFORCE ITS DEFENSIVE STRATEGY."

5. COMMENT: PURPORTED REASON SHAH POSTPONED MAY 12-16 STATE VISIT TO BULGARIA (DIPLOMATIC "LINGERING COLD") WAS NOT IN EVIDENCE DURING INTERVIEW. HIS RESPONSES TO REPORTERS QUESTIONS GIVE IMPRESSION THAT SHAH WAS LETTING OFF STEAM AND VENTING FRUSTRATION AT THE UNRELENTING DOMESTIC CRITICISM OF HIS REGIME AND THE THREATENING FOREIGN DEVELOPMENTS IN NEIGHBORING AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN. REGARDING SHAH'S ASSERTION ABOUT "BEVIN AND WELLES" PARA 1, WOULD APPRECIATE HISTORICAL DATA OF THAT EVENT WHICH AMBASSADOR MIGHT USE AT SOME EARLY OPPORTUNITY TO SET RECORD STRAIGHT AT LEAST WITH SHAH HIMSELF.
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